I WAS A CLICHÉ: THE SHELTERED GIRL WHO RAN OFF WITH THE FIRST REBEL WHO COMES ALONG.
BUT ON SOME LEVEL, I SENSED HOW DAMAGED MICHAEL WAS. AND HE SAW THAT DOUBT IN ME. HE COMMITTED SUICIDE... AND IN MY RAGE AND GRIEF, I DID THE SAME.
A FOOLISH YOUNG GIRL'S TANTRUM. MY FATHER CAN'T DIE. NEITHER CAN I.
MY BODY BECAME PURE ENERGY WHILE IT HEALED ITSELF. I HAD EVERY INTENTION OF FINDING MY BELOVED. OF RESURRECTING HIM. BUT THERE WAS NO NEED.
TO ESCAPE THE ATTENTION WE'D DRAWN, MICHAEL HAD HIDDEN HIS LIFE FORCE IN THE BODIES OF HIS ANCESTORS. TRICKED EVERYONE... INCLUDING ME.
MICHAEL, MY FATHER--THE TWO MEN IN THE UNIVERSE I'D GIVEN EVERYTHING TO--HAD BETRAYED ME. I DIDN'T WANT TO LIVE, BUT I COULDN'T DIE.
SO I STAYED IN ENERGY FORM, HIDDEN IN UNDERSPACE. I LET MY CONSCIOUSNESS DRIFT...
THEN YOUR DR. PYM FOUND ME.
THINKING I WAS HIS LATE WIFE, HE TRANSMITTED HER MEMORIES INTO MY MIND. IT WAS A REVELATION.
I EXPERIENCED THE GROWTH OF A WOMAN WHO BEGAN MUCH LIKE ME: BEHOLDEN TO A FATHER, THEN A HUSBAND... DEFINING HERSELF THROUGH THEM, AND HURT BY THEM.
BUT JANET VAN DYNE WAS STRONGER THAN ME. SHE ROSE TO BE A HERO. A LEADER OF THE AVENGERS...A POWERFUL, COMPLETE WOMAN IN HER OWN RIGHT.
I WANT TO BE LIKE HER. AND THE ONLY WAY I EVER WILL IS TO STOP MICHAEL.

INFINITE AVENGERS MANSION. MAIN ATRIUM.
YOU TEST MY PATIENCE, AVENGERS!
I AM TRYING TO BE MERCIFUL! I AM TRYING TO RESTRAIN MYSELF AND NOT SLAUGHTER YOU ALL! BUT IF YOU DON'T BRING ME MY WIFE, I WILL ERASE YOU FROM EXISTENCE!
BOLD WORDS, MADMAN...AND HOLLOW ONES! FAR YOU THE POWER YOU CLAIM, YOU WOULD BE VICTORIOUS ERE NOW!
BUT THE AVENGERS YET STAND... AND SHALL LAY YOU LOW!
KRAKRAAMM
KKUHH!

TOOM
TOOM
TOOOM

AFTER SCHOOL SPECIAL

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Okay…was that epic or what? I may be biased, but I think our new regular art team of penciler Tom Raney and inker Scott Hanna, along with our longtime colorist and letterer, Jeromy Cox and Joe Caramagna, knocked it out of the park their first time up at bat. I threw an army of characters at them and they not only didn't complain, they poured a can of awesome all over every page! Now I want to do a Deathlok/Killraven miniseries with these guys! All right, let's open the mailbag (metaphorically, as there is no actual bag nor physical mail in our bold world of the future):

Consistency. It's the quality that AVENGERS ACADEMY has every issue. The art remains fantastic (I was sorry to hear that Mike's going), the colors pop, and the characters stay true to form.

It's even present in who goes after the Hood. Striker, Hazmat, and Veil are the ones that feel closest to the attack on Tigra, Striker because of his own encounter with abuse, Hazmat because of her brutal view of how super villains should be dealt with, and Veil because, well, she can't help getting involved in everything!

This is one of the titles that I look forward to every month, and with Taskmaster coming up in the next issue, I don't think that's about to change.

John Bailey
St. Charles, MO

John, great job analyzing why Striker, Hazmat and Veil were the ones to go after the Hood…although I'd add that Veil and Hazmat were among those tortured the worst by Norman Osborn, so that had something to do with their thinking as well. Reptil and Mettle were certainly badly hurt by Osborn, but had their own reasons for not joining in: Reptil because of his strong adherence to Avengers heroic ideals, and Mettle because he was already strongly ambivalent about having gone after Osborn in issue #4. I'm also pleased you complimented the brilliant color work of Jeromy Cox, who I think took his game to new heights this issue! And hey, let us know what you thought of the Taskmaster story!

Hey, Buddy! Longtime Marvel Zombie here. Loyal as they get. Especially concerning all things Avengers. Thick and thin, good and awful, I've been there for 35 years of collecting.

It takes a worthy cause to inspire me to write a letter these days. Years ago, it was far different. My claims to fame at Marvel were the ten or so letters I had printed in the late MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS humoring my old buddy, Mark Powers, editor at the time. And, secondly, a hand written reply to a letter such as this from Jim Valentino back in the '90s when he was aboard GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY. I even have that letter framed. Back then I wrote a lengthy letter to Jim offering him dozens of rich ideas for the Guardians, and he felt compelled to share with me that our ideas were very close. To say the least I was very honored by him.

Why do I offer these tidbits of personal nostalgia? Because I get the same vibe from your creative ability, Christos. Being a creative fella like myself and respecting continuity as I do, your writing is intoxicating to say the least. I love your characterization process and your respect toward bringing back long lost characters or giving personality to otherwise useless characters. Every issue of your books finds me reminiscing for the old days, longing to see characters that haven't reared their heads in 20 years or longer. Example: Korvac! I'm ready for the Collector, bring him on. Better yet, Korvac's wife, Collector's daughter. I hope there's a child between the two that has a spot at the Academy.

I'm certain you get the request for new students all the time. I'm no different. I want the Academy expanded in a massive wave of students and teachers alike.

Keep up the stellar job you're doing. Peace!

Len Biehl a.k.a Zen

Ps. My wife and soul Jennifer demanded I add a thumbs up in your direction as well. She too reads ACADEMY.

Len, your letter (which was too long to print unedited, hope you don't mind) was great, flattering and chock full of ideas! But it does bring up a point I think it's important to make. While we appreciate and welcome your thoughts on what you'd like to see us do with Marvel characters, for legal reasons relating to copyrights and other boring things, nowadays it's kind of tricky for you to send us ideas for brand-new characters. We can't consider them for use, and who knows, you might want to save them for your own comics some day! I don't mean to sound like a killjoy, but that's the world we live in…as you know, Marvel is always developing new concepts, and one of the reasons Marvel doesn't accept unsolicited submissions is that if they happen to be similar to ideas, characters or storylines already being worked on, it could create some sticky legal situations.

That said, please do let us know who you'd like to see turn up among the characters already in Marvel's library! You showed a flash of the same psychic ability Jim Valentino saw in you back in the day, Len, when you suggested bringing Korvac's wife Carina back… here she is in this very issue, and she plays a huge role in our next issue as well. And your suggestions for other characters were inspired as well…many of which I've considered, and who could always show up down the road.

As for new students, in issue 14.1 – a great jumping on point if you want to introduce friends of yours to AVENGERS ACADEMY – you'll get a look at some of the super-powered kids Osborn trained who didn't make it into the Academy… but who may still have a profound effect on our kids. Thanks again for your enthusiasm and loyalty…and please give your wife Jennifer a thumbs-up from me!

That brings me to another request for you guys: now that we're publishing two issues of AVENGERS ACADEMY a month on occasion, we need more letters than ever…so keep 'em coming! And in addition to your name, please let us know what city and state you're in (or country, if outside the USA), so we can see how far the family of True Believers extends!

Next month: The Avengers are down… but the fight's not over. Get ready to see what the students of Avengers Academy look like as adults!

Christos Gage

NEXT!

Send e-mail to
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(please mark as OKAY TO PRINT)